DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 421 906 HE 031 427

TITLE	Graduate Field of Study, by Sex. Indicator of the Month.
INSTITUTION	National Center for Education Statistics (ED), Washington, DC.
REPORT NO	NCES-98-011
PUB DATE	1998-08-00
NOTE	4p.; Extracted from "The Condition of Education, 1997"; see ED 404 766.
AVAILABLE FROM	World Wide Web: http://www.ed.gov/NCES/pubs/ce
PUB TYPE	Information Analyses (070) -- Numerical/Quantitative Data (110) -- Reports - Research (143)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Business Education; Computer Science; Degrees (Academic); Doctoral Degrees; Education; Engineering; *Graduate Study; Higher Education; Humanities; Masters Degrees; Medical Education; Natural Sciences; Nontraditional Occupations; Sex Differences; Social Sciences; Tables (Data)

ABSTRACT

Changing job market opportunities affect the fields in which males and females choose to earn a graduate degree. This report examines disparities in field choices of the sexes. Highlighted are the following: (1) in 1994 substantially more females than males earned graduate degrees in education and the health professions; males earned a higher proportion of degrees in natural sciences, computer sciences and engineering, and business management; (2) although differences in the proportion of the sexes earning master's degrees in business management narrowed between 1971 and the mid-1980s, males were still twice as likely to earn a master's degree in business management in 1994; (3) differences in the proportions of males and females earning master's degrees in computer sciences and engineering narrowed each year between 1970 and 1986; however, since 1986 the proportion of males has stayed constant at five times that of females; (4) while a higher percentage of males earned master's degrees in the social and behavioral sciences between 1971 and 1983, a higher percentage of females earned these degrees between 1984 and 1994; and (5) since 1971 females have been consistently more likely to earn a doctoral degree in the social and behavioral sciences. Degrees awarded by selected fields are tabulated for the years between 1971-94. (MAB)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

INDICATOR OF THE MONTH

NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS

ED 421 906

August 1998

Graduate field of study, by sex

NE 031 423

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

INDICATOR OF THE MONTH

NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS

August 1998

Graduate field of study, by sex

Changing opportunities within the job market affect the fields in which males and females choose to earn a graduate degree. The female field concentration ratio shows how much the fields studied by females differ from those studied by males. A ratio above 1.0 indicates that females are more likely than males to major in a field, and a ratio below 1.0 indicates the opposite pattern. Changes in the ratio show whether differences in the field preferences of males and females are narrowing or widening, and also may indicate changes in females' occupations and earning potential compared to those of males.

- **Overall, in 1994, substantially more females than males earned graduate degrees in education and health professions. A higher proportion of males than females earned graduate degrees in natural sciences, computer sciences and engineering, and business management.**
- **Between 1970 and 1986, the difference in the proportion of men and women earning master's degrees in computer sciences and engineering narrowed each year. Since 1986, it has remained stable with males being five times more likely than females to earn a master's degree in computer sciences and engineering.**
- **Although differences in the proportions of males and females earning master's degrees in business management narrowed between 1971 and the mid-1980s when the trend leveled off, males were still twice as likely as females to earn a master's degree in business management in 1994.**
- **From 1971 to 1983, a higher percentage of males than females earned master's degrees in the social and behavioral sciences. From 1984 to 1994, a higher percentage of females than males earned master's degrees in this field. At the doctorate level, females have been consistently more likely to earn a degree in the social and behavioral sciences since 1971.**

Female field concentration ratio[1] of graduate degrees conferred, by field of study and degree level: Selected academic years ending 1971–94

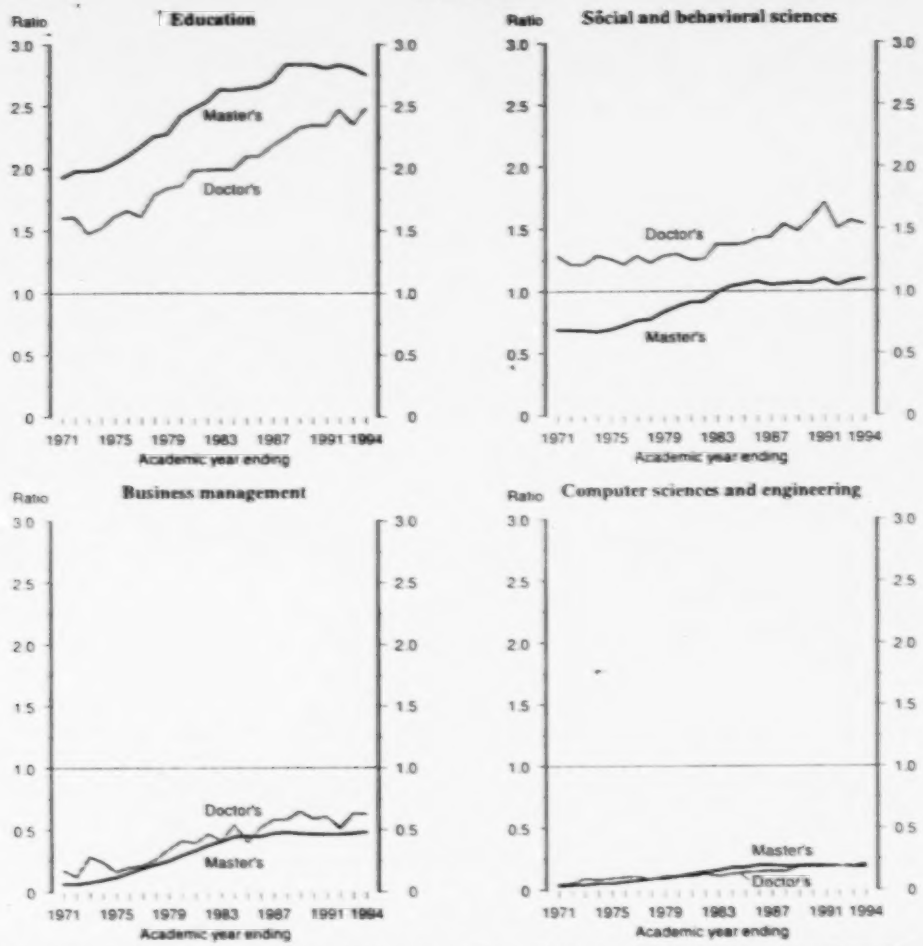
Field of study and degree level	1971	1974	1977	1980	1983	1986	1989	1992	1993	1994
Master's degrees										
Humanities	1.58	1.34	1.17	1.08	1.06	1.12	1.06	1.08	1.08	1.09
Social/behavioral sciences	0.69	0.67	0.76	0.88	0.99	1.08	1.07	1.05	1.08	1.10
Natural sciences	0.48	0.43	0.44	0.43	0.48	0.53	0.56	0.54	0.55	0.55
Computer sciences and engineering	0.03	0.05	0.07	0.11	0.15	0.20	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19
Education	1.92	1.99	2.18	2.42	2.64	2.66	2.84	2.84	2.81	2.75
Business management	0.06	0.09	0.19	0.30	0.41	0.45	0.47	0.46	0.47	0.48
Health professions	1.85	2.00	2.37	2.66	3.01	3.16	3.29	3.30	3.31	3.19
Other technical/professional[2]	1.56	1.24	1.04	1.10	1.22	1.27	1.30	1.33	1.35	1.33
Doctor's degrees										
Humanities	1.89	1.71	1.41	1.10	1.09	1.08	1.05	1.13	1.13	1.09
Social/behavioral sciences	1.29	1.28	1.29	1.30	1.38	1.42	1.48	1.50	1.56	1.54
Natural sciences	0.67	0.63	0.56	0.56	0.59	0.58	0.64	0.69	0.70	0.69
Computer sciences and engineering	0.04	0.08	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.15	0.18	0.19	0.18	0.21
Education	1.60	1.52	1.61	1.86	1.99	2.10	2.32	2.47	2.35	2.48
Business management	0.17	0.24	0.21	0.41	0.41	0.52	0.65	0.51	0.63	0.63
Health professions	1.19	1.24	1.46	1.91	1.57	1.94	2.35	2.33	2.18	2.25
Other technical/professional[2]	0.76	0.70	0.88	0.87	0.83	1.00	0.98	1.01	1.09	1.07

[1] The female field concentration ratio is calculated as the percentage of females earning degrees who majored in a specific field divided by the percentage of males earning degrees who majored in the same field. Includes degrees conferred to U.S. and non-U.S. citizens.

[2] Principally composed of public administration at the master's degree level and agriculture and natural resources at the doctor's degree level.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *Digest of Education Statistics, 1996* (based on IPEDS/HEGIS "Completions" surveys).

Female field concentration ratio* of graduate degrees conferred: Academic years ending 1971–94



* The female field concentration ratio is calculated as the percentage of females earning degrees who majored in a specific field divided by the percentage of males earning degrees who majored in the same field. Includes degrees conferred to U.S. and non-U.S. citizens.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *Digest of Education Statistics, 1996* (based on IPEDS/HEGIS "Completions" surveys).

This indicator is one of 60 from *The Condition of Education 1997*. It is in the public domain and may be reproduced without permission. Suggested citation: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *The Condition of Education 1997*, NCES 97-388, by Thomas M. Smith, Beth Aronstamm Young, Yupin Bae, Susan P. Choy, and Nabeel Alsalam. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office. To obtain a copy of the full volume of *The Condition of Education*, contact the National Education Data Resource Center on (703) 845-3151 (E-mail: nedrc@inet.ed.gov). This title is also available on the Internet at http://www.ed.gov/NCES/pubs/ce.

United States
Department of Education
Washington, DC 20208–5650

Official Business
Penalty for Private Use, $300

Postage and Fees Paid
U.S. Department of
Education
Permit No. G–17

FIRST CLASS